

MEMO TO: Mike Ganley CENAN-OP-EM. John Hasselman CENAN-OP-EM
SUBJECT: Ice conditions on northern New York and Vermont Rivers located in the
New York District

DATE: 28 March 2005

On 25 March 2005, Andy Tuthill checked ice conditions by air on the New York District rivers listed below. The focus was on sites where historic ice jams and ice jam floods are known to have occurred.

Winooski River, Montpelier, VT
Lamoille River Hardwick, VT
Mississquoi River, East Berkshire, VT to Lake Champlain
Great Chazey, Mooers to Lake Champlain
East Branch Ausable River, Keene Valley to Lake Champlain

Considerable melting has occurred since the inspection of 16 March, which has reduced the ice jam flood potential on the rivers in northern Vermont and northeastern NY. The most melting was seen on the Winooski near Montpelier and also the East Branch of the Ausable from Keene Valley to Jay. The ice volume and jam potential increases as one moves north to the Great Chazey and Mississquoi Rivers. Here much less open water was visible.

The ice supply on the *Winooski River* and tributaries upstream of Montpelier had diminished to the point that serious jams and flooding are very unlikely. Fig 1 shows open water through the downtown Montpelier area with a short section of decaying ice upstream of the Bailey Dam. From here the channel opens up to the Stevens confluence then partially ice covered as far as the dam at Levesque Station.

The *Lamoille River* at and above Hardwick was more than three-quarters ice covered and winter-like in appearance (Fig. 2).

The ice cover on the *Mississquoi River* was still quite complete from the Canadian border downstream to Lake Champlain. The snow cover on the ice was consolidated and was turning gray in places. Fig. 3 shows the Mississquoi at East Berkshire, VT.

The *Great Chazey River* is sheet ice covered from Mooers to the dam below Perrys Mills, then partially open through the rapids below, and sheet ice covered through the village of Champlain to the Lake. Some ice jam flood potential still exists for Champlain (Fig. 4).

The *East Branch of the Ausable* had melted out considerably since 16 March from Keene Valley to Upper Jay. Between Upper Jay and Jay, the channel was mostly covered in gray sheet ice (Fig. 5). Below Ausable Forks the river was covered in gray sheet ice.

Conclusions

As a result of over two weeks of gradual but continuous melting, the ice jam flood potential is minimal southeast of a line that extends from about Ausable Forks, NY, crosses north of Montpelier, VT, south of Farmington, ME, and Dover-Foxcroft ME to about Houlton, ME. Following this line west to east, today's predicted rainfall increases from 0.5 to about 1 inch (Fig. 6) with rainfall amounts decreasing in the northwesterly direction. The rivers in the northeastern New York and northern Vermont area will probably not break up, while a possibility of breakup and jams exists for the rivers in south central Maine such as the Sandy and upper Piscataquis.

Respectfully submitted,

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Fig. 1. Winooski River through Montpelier, VT, looking downstream.



Fig. 2. Lamoille River at Hardwick, VT, looking upstream.



Fig. 3. Mississquoi River at East Berkshire, VT



Fig. 4. Great Chazy River at Champlain, NY.



Fig. 5. East Branch Ausable River looking downstream towards Jay, NY.

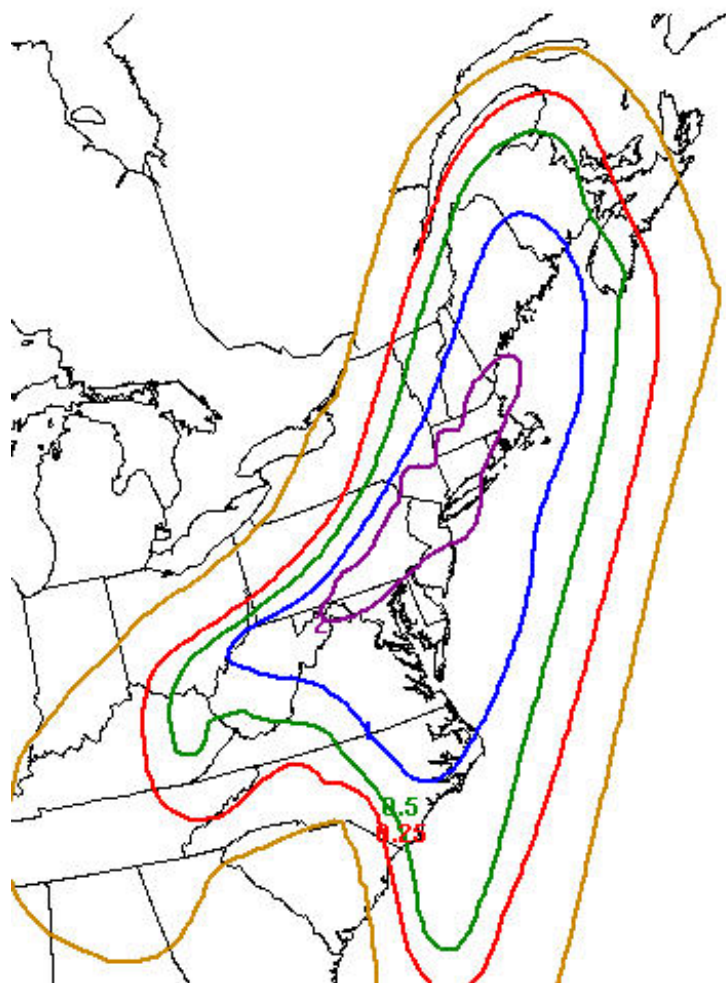


Fig. 6. Forecast rainfall for 28 March 2005.